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(54) **ELECTRICAL CONTACT PINS FOR ELECTRICALLY COUPLING ELECTRONIC DEVICES, BATTERIES, AND/OR BATTERY CHARGERS**

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Related U.S. Application Data

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H01R 13/24 (2006.01)
H01R 13/08 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ***H01R 13/2464*** (2013.01); *H01R 13/08* (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC H01R 13/2428; H01R 11/18
USPC 439/824, 700; 320/107
See application file for complete search history.

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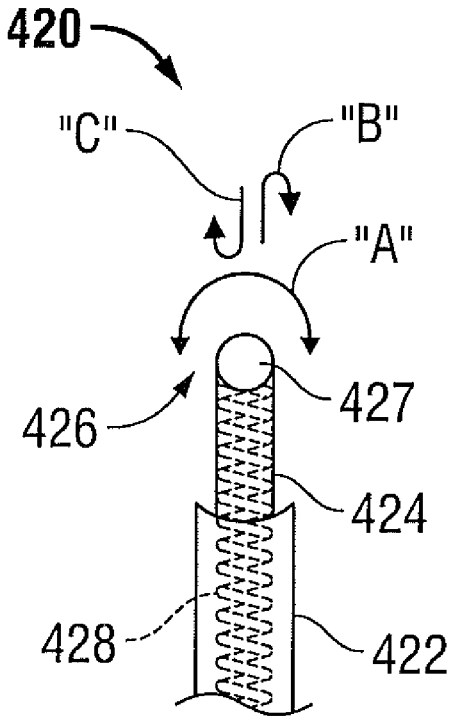
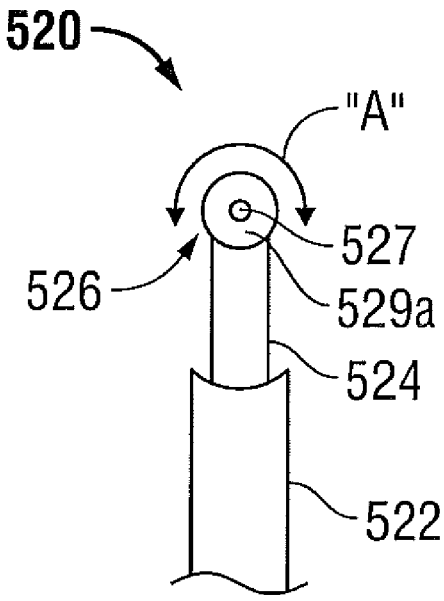
Primary Examiner — Vanessa Girardi

(57) **ABSTRACT**

An electrical contact pin includes an outer shaft, an inner shaft at least partially received within the outer shaft and slidable relative to the outer shaft, and a rotatable member disposed at a free end of the inner shaft. The rotatable member is rotatable relative to the inner shaft in at least one direction.

14 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets





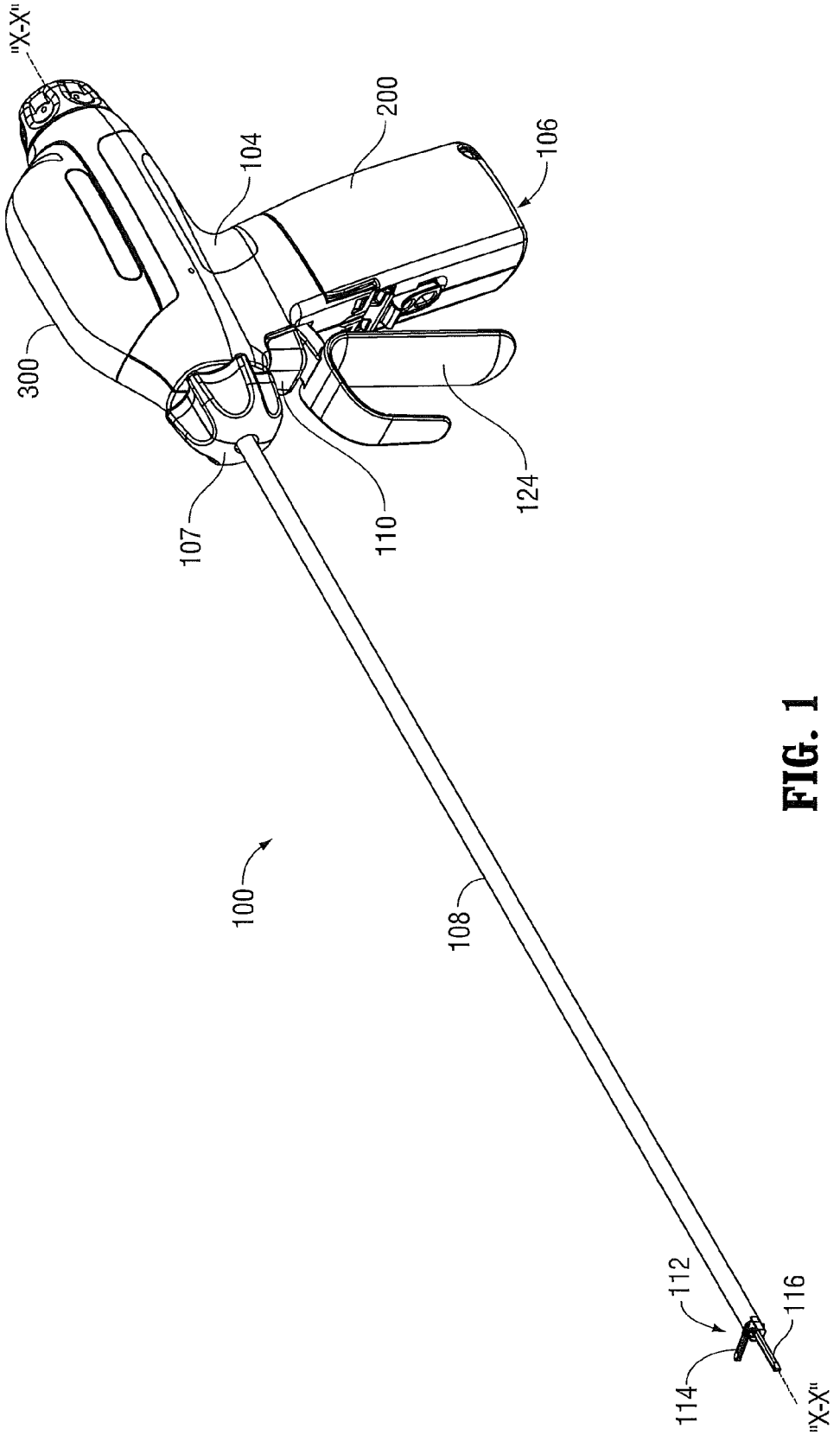


FIG. 1

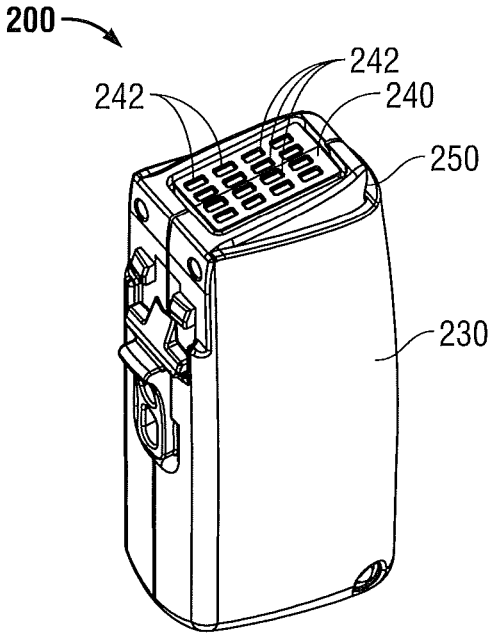


FIG. 2A

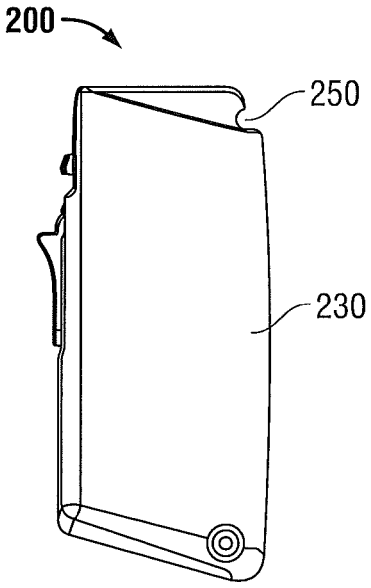


FIG. 2B

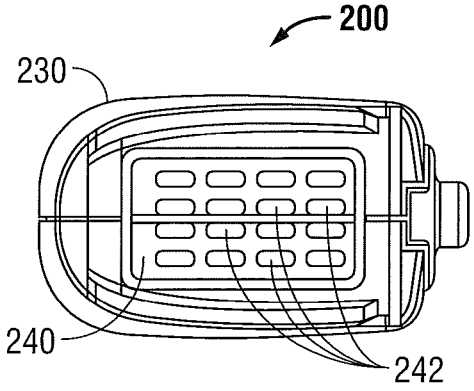


FIG. 2C

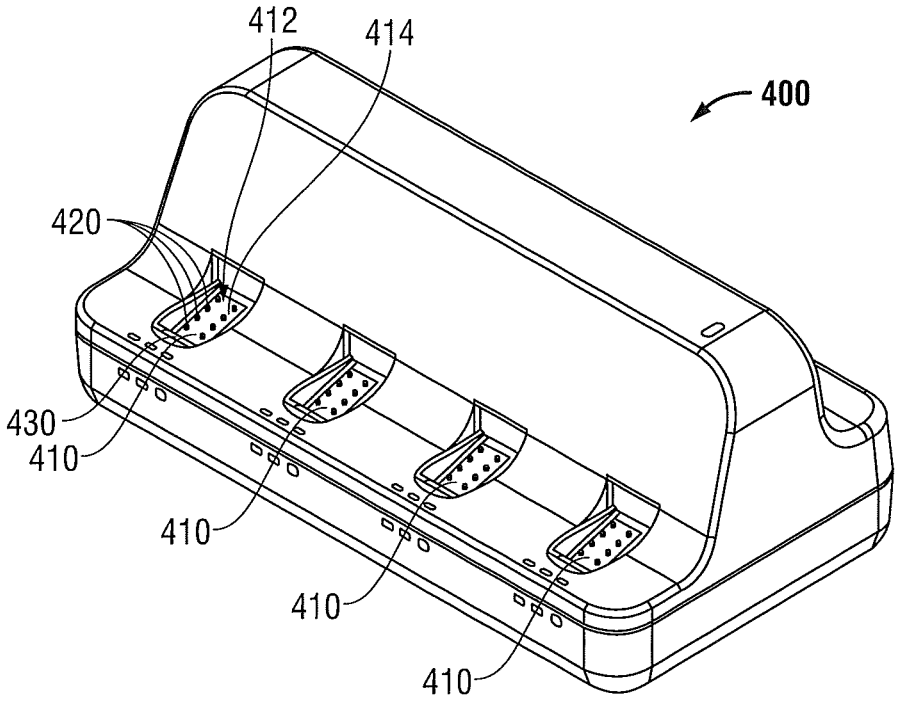


FIG. 3A

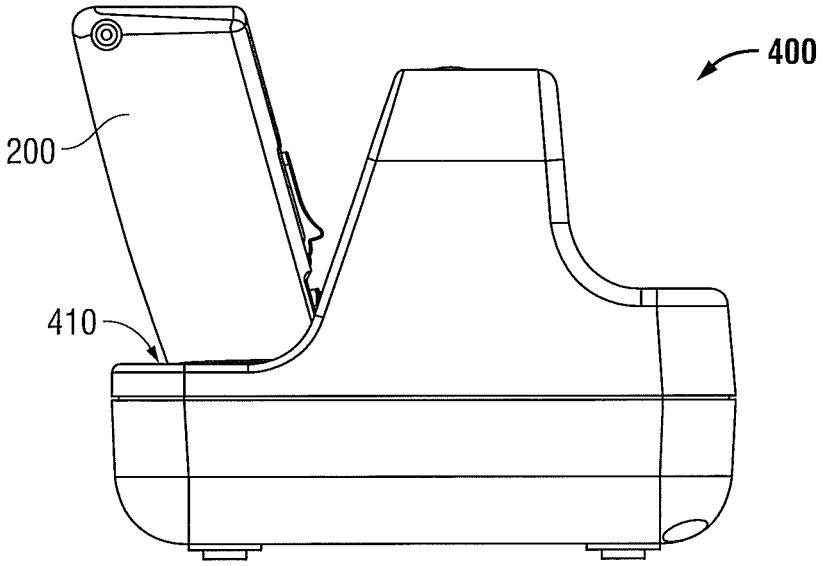


FIG. 3B

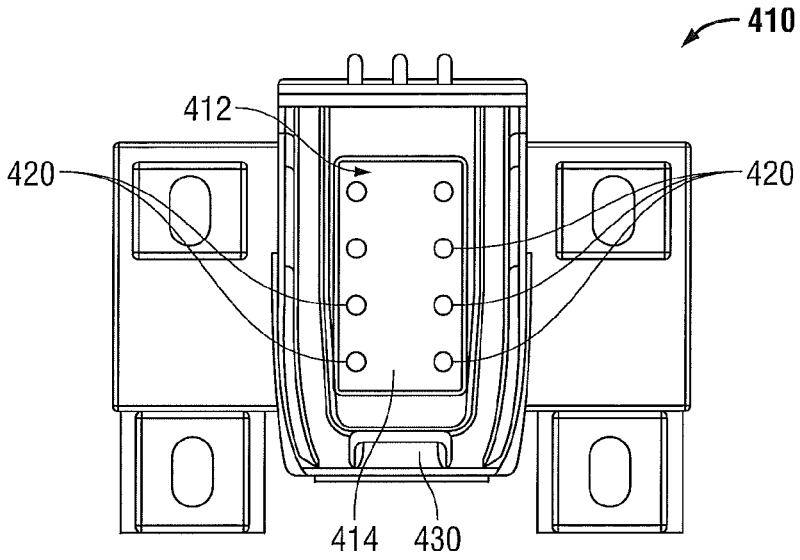


FIG. 3C

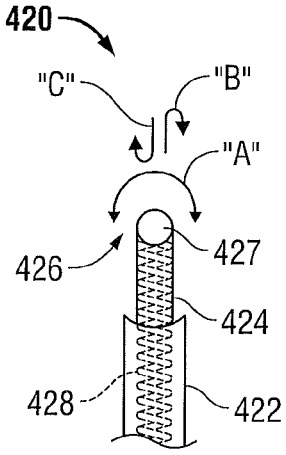


FIG. 4

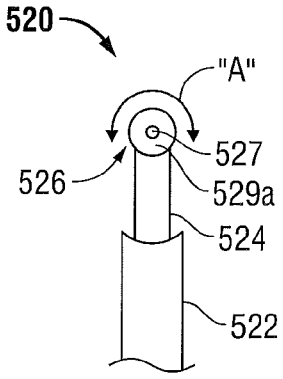


FIG. 5A

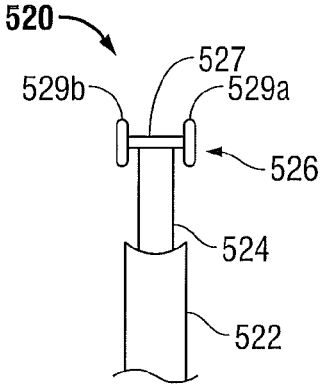


FIG. 5B

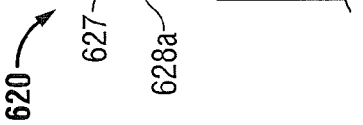

620
627
628a
629
626
628b
624
622

FIG. 6

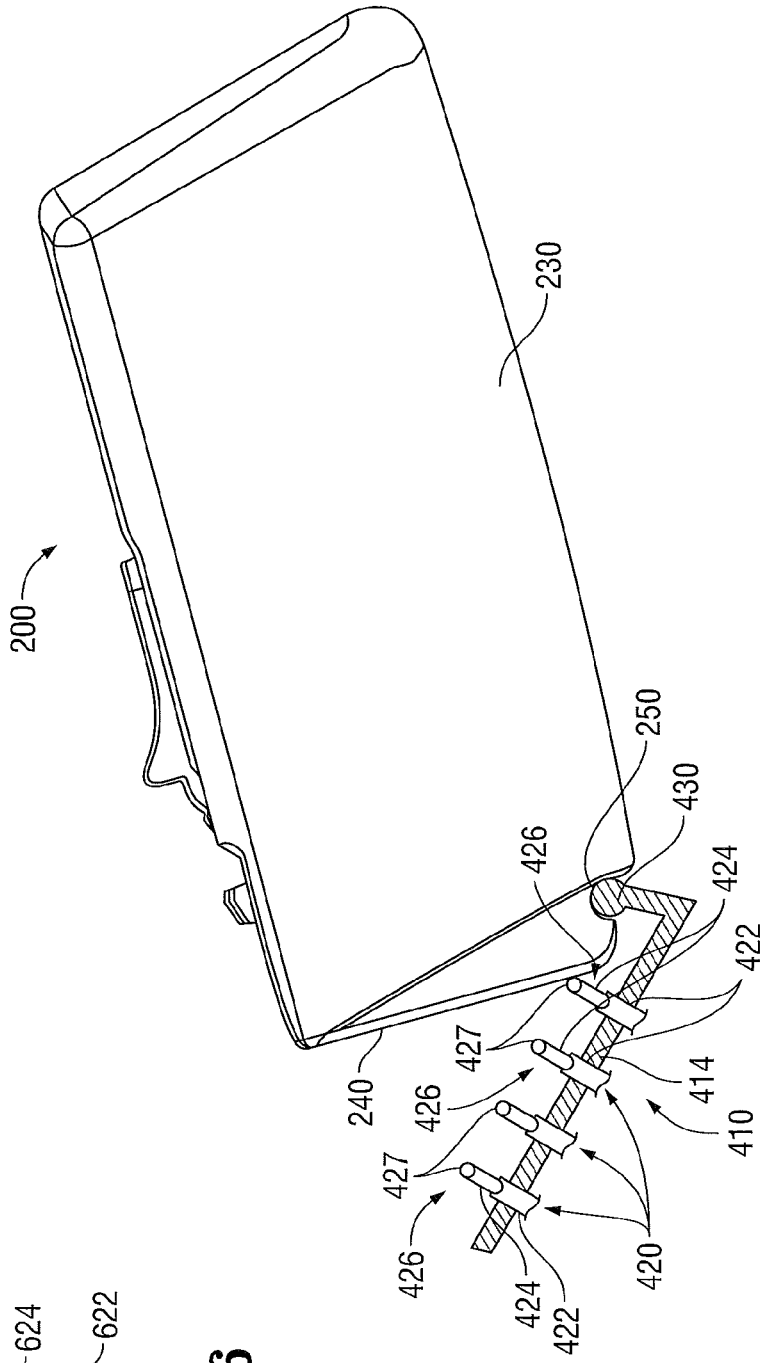

200
230
250
430
426
424
422
427
414
426
410
427
426
420
424
422
240

FIG. 7

ELECTRICAL CONTACT PINS FOR ELECTRICALLY COUPLING ELECTRONIC DEVICES, BATTERIES, AND/OR BATTERY CHARGERS

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

The present application claims the benefit of and priority to U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 61/714,584, filed on Oct. 16, 2012, the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND

1. Technical Field

The present disclosure relates to electronic devices, batteries, and/or battery chargers and, more particularly, to electrical contact pins for electrically coupling electronic devices, batteries, and/or battery chargers to one another.

2. Background of Related Art

Battery-powered devices are advantageous in that they obviate the need for cables coupling the device to an electrical outlet or external power source. A typical battery pack for a battery-powered device includes one or more battery cells coupled to one another via a powering circuit that provides electrical power to the device and receives power from a battery charger. Battery packs charge, discharge, and/or communicate with electronic devices and battery chargers through electrical contacts disposed on the exterior of the battery pack that electrically couple to corresponding electrical contacts on the electronic devices and battery chargers. As can be appreciated, damage to the electrical contacts of the battery pack and/or the device or charger to which it connects may inhibit communication, charging, and/or discharging between the battery pack and the device or charger.

SUMMARY

The electrical contact pins provided in accordance with the present disclosure are configured to reduce the oblique forces applied to the electrical contact pins by battery packs, electronic devices, and/or battery chargers during engagement of these components to one another, thereby alleviating stresses on the electrical contact pins and reducing the likelihood of damaging such electrical contact pins during engagement of the battery packs, electronic devices and/or battery chargers to one another.

In accordance with aspects of the present disclosure, an electrical contact pin is provided. The electrical contact pin includes an outer shaft, an inner shaft, and a rotatable member. The inner shaft is at least partially received within the outer shaft and is slidable relative to the outer shaft. The rotatable member is disposed at a free end of the inner shaft and is rotatable relative to the inner shaft in one or more directions.

In aspects, a biasing member is interdisposed between the inner shaft and the outer shaft. The biasing member is configured to bias the inner and outer shafts apart from one another.

In aspects, the rotatable member includes a spherical member disposed at the free end of the inner shaft. The spherical member is rotatable through 360 degrees of rotation relative to the inner shaft.

In aspects, the rotatable member includes one or more wheels disposed at the free end of the inner shaft. The wheel(s) is rotatable relative to the inner shaft.

In accordance with the present disclosure, a battery charging apparatus is provided. The battery charging apparatus includes one or more charging bays. Each charging bay is configured to operably receive a battery assembly therein. One or more electrical contact pins are disposed within each of the charging bays. The electrical contact pin(s) may be configured similarly to any of the aspects described above.

In accordance with the present disclosure, a system is provided. The system includes a battery assembly having one or more electrical contact(s) and a device configured to operably couple to the battery assembly for charging the battery assembly or receiving power from the battery assembly. The device includes one or more electrical contact pins configured to electrically coupled to the electrical contact(s) of the battery assembly. Each of the electrical contact pins may be configured similarly to any of the aspects described above.

The device may include a surgical instrument, a battery charging apparatus, or any other suitable device.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Various aspects of the present disclosure are described hereinbelow with reference to the drawings, wherein:

FIG. **1** is a side, perspective view of an exemplary portable, battery-powered surgical instrument configured for use in accordance with the present disclosure;

FIG. **2**A is a side, perspective view of the battery assembly of the surgical instrument of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **2**B is a side view of the battery assembly of FIG. **2**A;

FIG. **2**C is a top view of the battery assembly of FIG. **2**A;

FIG. **3**A is a side, perspective view of an exemplary battery charging device configured for use in accordance with the present disclosure;

FIG. **3**B is a side view of the battery charging device of FIG. **3**A having the battery assembly of FIG. **2**A operably engaged within a charging bay of the battery charging device;

FIG. **3**C is a top view of one of the charging bays of the battery charging device of FIG. **3**B;

FIG. **4** is a side, cross-sectional view of one embodiment of an electrical contact pin provided in accordance with the present disclosure and configured for use with the battery charging device of FIG. **3**A;

FIG. **5**A is a side view of another embodiment of an electrical contact pin provided in accordance with the present disclosure and configured for use with the battery charging device of FIG. **3**A;

FIG. **5**B is a front view of the electrical contact pin of FIG. **5**A;

FIG. **6** is a front view of another embodiment of an electrical contact pin provided in accordance with the present disclosure and configured for use with the battery charging device of FIG. **3**A; and

FIG. **7** is partial-side, partial-cross-sectional view showing the battery assembly of FIG. **2**A being moved into operable engagement with the electrical contact pins of the battery charging device of FIG. **3**A.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FIG. **1** depicts a portable, battery-powered surgical instrument **100**, although any other suitable battery-powered device, e.g., surgical instrument, handheld tool, electronic device, etc., may be utilized in accordance with the present disclosure. Obviously, different considerations apply to each particular type of device; however, the features and aspects of the present disclosure are equally applicable and remain gen-

erally consistent with respect to any suitable battery-powered device. For the purposes herein, surgical instrument **100** is generally described.

Continuing with reference to FIG. **1**, surgical instrument **100**, shown as an ultrasonic tissue treating device, generally includes a housing **104**, a handle assembly **106**, a rotating assembly **107**, a shaft **108**, an activation button **110**, an end effector assembly **112**, a releasably engagable battery assembly **200**, and a releasably engagable generator assembly **300**. End effector assembly **112** includes first and second jaw members **114**, **116**, one or both of which is movable relative to the other, e.g., upon actuation of moveable handle **124**, between an open position and a clamping position for grasping tissue therebetween. One of the jaw members, e.g., jaw member **116**, is configured to serve as an active or oscillating ultrasonic blade that is selectively activatable to ultrasonically treat tissue grasped between jaw members **114**, **116**.

Shaft **108** is coupled to housing **104** at a proximal end of shaft **108** and extends distally from housing **104** to define a longitudinal axis "X-X." End effector assembly **112**, including jaw members **114**, **116**, is disposed at a distal end of shaft **108**. Housing **104** is configured to releasably engage generator assembly **300** and battery assembly **200**. Generator assembly **300** includes a transducer (not shown) configured to convert electrical energy provided by battery assembly **200** into mechanical energy that produces motion at the end of a waveguide, e.g., at jaw member **116**. More specifically, the electronics (not shown) of the generator assembly **300** convert the electrical energy provided by battery assembly **200** into a high voltage AC waveform that drives the transducer (not shown). When the transducer (not shown) and the waveguide are driven at their resonant frequency, mechanical motion, e.g., ultrasonic motion, is produced at the active jaw member **116** for treating tissue grasped between jaw members **114**, **116**. Activation button **110** is disposed on housing **104** and is selectively activatable to operate instrument **100** in two modes of operation: a low-power mode of operation and a high-power mode of operation.

With reference to FIGS. **2**A-**2**C, battery assembly **200** of surgical instrument **100** (FIG. **1**) generally includes an outer housing **230** and a contact cap **240**. Outer housing **230** houses the battery pack (not shown) and battery circuitry (not shown) of battery assembly **200**, while contact cap **240** provides an interface including a plurality of electrically-conductive electrical contacts **242** for electrically coupling the battery pack (not shown) and battery circuitry (not shown) of battery assembly **200** to surgical instrument **100** (FIG. **1**), charging apparatus **400** (FIGS. **3**A-**3**B), or other suitable device. More specifically, electrical contacts **242** are configured to electrically couple to corresponding contacts (not shown) on surgical instrument **100** (FIG. **1**) for transmitting power, control signals, and/or communicating with surgical instrument **100** (FIG. **1**) and to corresponding electrical contact pins **420** of one of charging bays **410** of charging apparatus **400** (see FIGS. **3**A-**3**B) for charging battery assembly **200** and/or communicating with charging assembly **400**. Further, outer housing **230** of battery assembly **200** defines an elongated pivot recess **250** about which battery assembly **200** is rotated into engagement with one of the bays **410** of charging apparatus **400** (FIGS. **3**A-**3**C) such that electrical contacts **242** of battery assembly **200** are electrically coupled to electrical contact pins **420** (FIG. **3**C) of charging apparatus **400** (FIGS. **3**A-**3**C), as will be described below. Pivot recess **250** may additionally or alternatively be used to pivot battery assembly **200** into mechanical engagement and electrical communication with surgical instrument **100** (FIG. **1**).

Turning now to FIGS. **3**A-**3**C, in conjunction with FIGS. **2**A-**2**C, charging apparatus **400** is shown including four bays **410**, each configured to receive a battery assembly **200** for charging, updating, testing, etc. the battery assembly **200**, although greater or less than four bays **410** may also be provided. As best shown in FIG. **3**C, each bay **410** defines a recessed portion **412** configured to at least partially receive a battery assembly **200**. A base surface **414** of the recessed portion **412** of each bay **410** includes a plurality of electrical contact pins **420** that, as mentioned above, are configured to electrically couple to corresponding electrical contacts **242** of contact cap **240** of battery assembly **200**. Various embodiments of electrical contact pins **420**, **520**, **620** (FIGS. **4**A-**4**B, **5**, and **6**, respectively) are described below.

Each bay **410** of charging apparatus **400** further includes a pivot bar **430** configured for receipt within pivot recess **250** of battery assembly **200** such that battery assembly **200** may be rotated about pivot recess **250** and pivot bar **430** and into mechanical engagement within recessed portion **412** of bay **410** to electrically couple electrical contacts **242** and electrical contact pins **420** with one another (see FIG. **7**). Providing a pivot bar **430** and pivot recess **250** about which battery assembly **200** is rotated to couple battery assembly **200** within one of the bays **410** of charging apparatus **400** facilitates proper alignment and positioning of battery assembly **200** within charging apparatus **400** and, more particularly, proper alignment and positioning of electrical contacts **242** relative to electrical contact pins **420**. As such, proper mechanical engagement and electrical connections between battery assembly **200** and charging apparatus **400** are readily established. However, it is also envisioned that battery assembly **200** may be engaged within one of the bays **410** of charging apparatus **400** in any other suitable fashion, e.g., via sliding, direct insertion, etc.

Referring to FIGS. **4**, **5**A-**5**B, and **6**, in conjunction with FIGS. **2**A-**3**C, various embodiments of electrical contact pins **420** (FIG. **4**), **520** (FIGS. **5**A-**5**B), **620** (FIG. **6**) are shown configured for use with charging apparatus **400**, although electrical contact pins **420** (FIG. **4**), **520** (FIGS. **5**A-**5**B), **620** (FIG. **6**) may alternatively be provided on battery assembly **200**, surgical instrument **100** (FIG. **1**), or any other suitable component configured for releasable electrical coupling with another device for charging, discharging, communicating, or otherwise electrically interfacing therewith.

With reference to FIG. **4**, in conjunction with FIGS. **2**A-**3**C, electrical contact pin **420** is electrically coupled to the internal electronics (not shown), e.g., power, communication, and control circuitry, of charging apparatus **400**, and generally includes an electrically-conductive fixed outer shaft **422**, an electrically-conductive inner shaft **424** slidably received within and extending from outer shaft **422**, a tip portion **426** disposed at the free end of inner shaft **424**, and a biasing member **428** that biases inner shaft **424** upwardly and outwardly from outer shaft **422**, i.e., towards a less-overlapping configuration. Thus, as one of the electrical contacts **242** of contact cap **240** of battery assembly **200** is urged into electrical contact pin **420** upon engagement of battery assembly **200** within one of the bays **410** of charging apparatus **400**, tip portion **426** and inner shaft **424** of electrical contact pin **420** are urged inwardly against the bias of biasing member **428**. This configuration allows tip portion **426** to be maintained in contact with the corresponding electrical contact **242** of battery assembly **200** under the bias of biasing member **428**, thereby helping to ensure uninterrupted charging and/or communicating between battery assembly **200** and charging apparatus **400**.

Tip portion **426** of electrical contact pin **420** includes an electrically-conductive, e.g., gold or gold coated, spherical member **427** disposed at the free end thereof that is permitted to rotate in at least a plurality of directions relative to inner shaft **424**, as indicated by arrows "A," "B," and "C" in FIG. **4**, although spherical member **427** is not limited to rotation in these directions. Rather, spherical member **427** may be configured to rotate in any suitable combination of directions, or may be configured for 360 degrees of rotation, i.e., spherical member **427** may be rotatable in all directions. Spherical member **427** may be partially captured within the free end of inner shaft **424** (as shown) to permit 360 degrees of rotation, or may be coupled to inner shaft **424** in any other suitable fashion such that spherical member **427** is retained at the free end of inner shaft **424** and is rotatable relative to inner shaft **424** in at least a plurality of directions.

Continuing with reference to FIG. **4**, as mentioned above, inner shaft **424** is slidably received within outer shaft **422**. More specifically, the outer surface of inner shaft **424** and the inner surface of outer shaft **422** are maintained in electrical communication with one another, e.g., via direct contact or an electrically-conductive lubricant (graphite, grease, etc.) disposed therebetween, regardless of the positioning of inner shaft **424** and outer shaft **422** relative to one another. Spherical member **427** is partially captured at the free end of inner shaft **424** and is likewise maintained in electrical communication with inner shaft **424** in any suitable fashion, e.g., via direct contact or an electrically-conductive lubricant disposed therebetween. As such, contact between spherical member **427** and one of the electrical contacts **242** of battery assembly **200** establishes electrical communication between the battery cells and internal electronics (not shown) of battery assembly **200** and the internal electronics (not shown) of charging apparatus **400**.

Turning to FIGS. **5**A-**5**B, another embodiment of an electrical contact pin configured for use with for use with charging apparatus **400**, battery assembly **200** (FIGS. **2**A-**2**C), surgical instrument **100** (FIG. **1**), or any other suitable component, is shown designated by reference numeral **520**. Electrical contact pin **520**, similar to electrical contact pin **420** (FIG. **4**), includes an inner shaft **524** slidably received within and biased apart from a fixed outer shaft **522**. However, electrical contact pin **520** differs from electrical contact pin **420** (FIG. **4**) with respect to the configuration of tip portion **526**. Accordingly, for purposes of brevity, only tip portion **526** of electrical contact pin **520** will be detailed hereinbelow.

Tip portion **526** of electrical contact pin **520** includes a crossbar **527** mounted to the free end of inner shaft **524** and extending transversely relative to inner shaft **524**. Crossbar **527** includes one or more wheels **529***a*, **529***b* rotatably mounted thereto. For example, as shown in FIG. **5**B, first and second wheels **529***a*, **529***b* may be mounted at opposed ends of cross bar **527**, although greater or fewer wheels **529***a*, **529***b* and/or different configurations of wheels **529***a*, **529***b* are also contemplated. Wheels **529***a*, **529***b* are configured to rotate about crossbar **527**, as indicated by arrows "A" in FIG. **5**A. Crossbar **527** and wheels **529***a*, **529***b* are formed from an electrically-conductive material, e.g., gold (or may be coated with gold or other suitable electrically-conductive material), and are maintained in electrical communication with one another, e.g., via direct contact or an electrically-conductive lubricant disposed therebetween. As such, contact between wheels **529***a*, **529***b* and one of the electrical contacts **242** of battery assembly **200** (see FIGS. **2**A-**2**C) establishes electrical communication between the battery cells and internal electronics (not shown) of battery assembly **200** (FIGS. **2**A-**2**C) and the internal electronics (not shown) of charging apparatus **400** (FIGS. **3**A-**3**C).

Turning to FIG. **6**, another embodiment of an electrical contact pin configured for use with for use with charging apparatus **400**, battery assembly **200** (FIGS. **2**A-**2**C), surgical instrument **100** (FIG. **1**), or any other suitable component, is shown designated by reference numeral **620**. Electrical contact pin **620**, similar to electrical contact pin **520** (FIGS. **5**A-**5**B), includes an inner shaft **624** slidably received within and biased apart from a fixed outer shaft **622**. However, electrical contact pin **620** differs from electrical contact pin **520** (FIGS. **5**A-**5**B) with respect to the configuration of tip portion **626**. Accordingly, for purposes of brevity, only tip portion **626** of electrical contact pin **620** will be detailed hereinbelow.

Tip portion **626** of electrical contact pin **620** includes a pair of spaced-apart supports **628***a*, **628***b* extending from the free end of inner shaft **624**. A wheel **629** is rotatably mounted between supports **628***a*, **628***b* of inner shaft **624** via an axle **627** that extends between supports **628***a*, **628***b*. Wheel **629**, axle **627**, and supports **628***a*, **628***b* are formed from an electrically-conductive material, e.g., gold (or may be coated with gold or other suitable electrically-conductive material), and are maintained in electrical communication with one another, e.g., via direct contact or an electrically-conductive lubricant disposed therebetween. As such, contact between wheel **629** and one of the electrical contacts **242** of battery assembly **200** (see FIGS. **2**A-**2**C) establishes electrical communication between the battery cells and internal electronics (not shown) of battery assembly **200** (FIGS. **2**A-**2**C) and the internal electronics (not shown) of charging apparatus **400** (FIGS. **3**A-**3**C).

Turning now to FIG. **7**, the operation of electrical contact pin **420** during engagement of battery assembly **200** within one of the bays **410** of charging apparatus **400** is described, although the following is similarly applicable to electrical contact pin **520** (FIGS. **5**A-**5**B), and/or for engagement between any suitable electrical components having one or more electrical contacts and one or more corresponding electrical contact pins configured to electrically couple to one another.

As shown in FIG. **7**, in order to engage battery assembly **200** within bay **410** of charging apparatus **400**, battery assembly **200** is first approximated relative to bay **410** such that pivot recess **250** receives pivot bar **430**, thereby establishing a pivot point about which battery assembly **200** can be rotated into engagement within bay **410** of charging apparatus **400**. With pivot bar **430** disposed within pivot recess **250**, battery assembly **200** is rotated towards electrical contact pins **420**, which extend from base surface **414** of recessed portion **412** of bay **410**. As battery assembly **200** is rotated further, battery assembly **200**, lead by contact cap **240**, eventually contacts one or more of the electrical contact pins **420** of bay **410**. More specifically, battery assembly **200** is eventually urged into contact with one or more spherical members **427** of tip portions **426** of electrical contact pins **420** at an oblique angle relative thereto. The normal component of force, e.g., the force perpendicular to a plane defined by spherical members **427** of electrical contact pins **420**, applied to electrical contact pins **420** by battery assembly **200** causes spherical members **427** and inner shafts **424** to retract into their respective outer shafts **422**, against the bias of biasing member **428** (FIG. **4**). On the other hand, at least a portion of the non-normal components of force acting on spherical members **427** are transferred into rotational motion of spherical members **427** relative to their respective inner shafts **424**, thereby alleviating torque and stress on electrical contact pins **420**.

As can be appreciated, the direction of rotation of spherical members **427** corresponds to the direction of the applied force. Since spherical member **427** are permitted to rotate through 360 degrees of rotation in the exemplary embodiment of FIGS. **4**A-**4**B and **7**, spherical members **427** are able to alleviate at least a portion of the torque and stress on electrical contact pins **420** for any non-normal force acting on electrical contact pins **420**. Thus, although battery assembly **400** is shown and described herein as being engaged within bay **410** of charging apparatus **400** via rotation in a single direction, electrical contact pins **420** are equally capable of alleviating at least a portion of the torque and stress acting thereon for engagement of one component, e.g., battery assembly **200**, to another component, e.g., charging apparatus **400**, in any other suitable fashion, e.g., via sliding, direct insertion, etc.

Referring to FIGS. **5**A-**5**B, in conjunction with FIG. **7**, with respect to electrical contact pins **520**, since wheels **529***a*, **529***b* are limited to rotation about a single axis, e.g., about crossbar **527**, wheels **529***a*, **529***b* are capable of alleviating at least a portion of the torque and stress on electrical contact pins **420** for the non-normal forces (with respect to the plane defined by tip portions **526** of electrical contact pins **520**) that are normal to the rotation axis of wheels **529***a*, **529***b*. Thus, with respect to rotation of battery assembly **200** about a pivot point for engagement with charging apparatus **400**, aligning the rotation axis of wheels **529***a*, **529***b* in parallel orientation relative to the pivot point of battery assembly **200** allows for the alleviation of torque and stress on electrical contact pins **520** imparted thereon by battery assembly **200**.

While several embodiments of the disclosure have been shown in the drawings, it is not intended that the disclosure be limited thereto, as it is intended that the disclosure be as broad in scope as the art will allow and that the specification be read likewise. Therefore, the above description should not be construed as limiting, but merely as exemplifications of particular embodiments. Those skilled in the art will envision other modifications within the scope and spirit of the claims appended hereto.

What is claimed is:

1. An electrical contact pin, comprising:

an outer shaft;

an inner shaft at least partially received within the outer shaft and slidable relative to the outer shaft, the inner shaft defining a longitudinal axis; and

a rotatable member disposed at a free end of the inner shaft, the rotatable member configured to establish direct electrical communication with a corresponding contact, wherein the rotatable member is rotatable through 360 degrees relative to the inner shaft at least about an axis perpendicular to the longitudinal axis so as to reduce the application of oblique forces to the inner shaft.

2. The electrical contact pin according to claim **1**, further comprising a biasing member interdisposed between the inner shaft and the outer shaft, the biasing member configured to bias the inner and outer shafts apart from one another.

3. The electrical contact pin according to claim **1**, wherein the rotatable member includes a spherical member disposed at the free end of the inner shaft, the spherical member rotatable through 360 degrees relative to the inner shaft about a plurality of axes including the perpendicular axis.

4. The electrical contact pin according to claim **1**, wherein the rotatable member includes at least one wheel disposed at the free end of the inner shaft, the at least one wheel rotatable through 360 degrees relative to the inner shaft about the perpendicular axis.

5. A battery charging apparatus, including:

at least one charging bay, each charging bay configured to operably receive a battery assembly therein; and

at least one electrical contact pin disposed within each of the charging bays, the at least one electrical contact pin including:

an outer shaft;

an inner shaft at least partially received within the outer shaft and slidable relative to the outer shaft, the inner shaft defining a longitudinal axis; and

a rotatable member disposed at a free end of the inner shaft, the rotatable member configured to establish direct electrical communication with a corresponding contact, wherein the rotatable member is rotatable through 360 degrees relative to the inner shaft at least about an axis perpendicular to the longitudinal axis so as to reduce the application of oblique forces to the inner shaft.

6. The battery charging apparatus according to claim **5**, wherein the at least one electrical contact pin further comprises a biasing member interdisposed between the inner shaft and the outer shaft, the biasing member configured to bias the inner and outer shafts apart from one another.

7. The battery charging apparatus according to claim **5**, wherein the rotatable member of the at least one electrical contact pin includes a spherical member disposed at the free end of the inner shaft, the spherical member rotatable through 360 degrees relative to the inner shaft about a plurality of axes including the perpendicular axis.

8. The battery charging apparatus according to claim **5**, wherein the rotatable member of the at least one electrical contact pin includes at least one wheel disposed at the free end of the inner shaft, the at least one wheel rotatable through 360 degrees relative to the inner shaft about the perpendicular axis.

9. A system, comprising:

a battery assembly including at least one electrical contact; and

a device configured to operably couple to the battery assembly for charging the battery assembly or receiving power from the battery assembly, the device including at least one electrical contact pin configured to electrically coupled to the at least one electrical contact of the battery assembly, each electrical contact pin including:

an outer shaft;

an inner shaft at least partially received within the outer shaft and slidable relative to the outer shaft, the inner shaft defining a longitudinal axis; and

a rotatable member disposed at a free end of the inner shaft, the rotatable member configured to establish direct electrical communication with the at least one electrical contact, wherein the rotatable member is rotatable through 360 degrees relative to the inner shaft at least about an axis perpendicular to the longitudinal axis so as to reduce the application of oblique forces to the inner shaft.

10. The system according to claim **9**, wherein the at least one electrical contact pin further comprises a biasing member interdisposed between the inner shaft and the outer shaft, the biasing member configured to bias the inner and outer shafts apart from one another.

11. The system according to claim **9**, wherein the rotatable member of the at least one electrical contact pin includes a spherical member disposed at the free end of the inner shaft, the spherical member rotatable through 360 degrees relative to the inner shaft about a plurality of axes including the perpendicular axis.

12. The system according to claim **9**, wherein the rotatable member of the at least one electrical contact pin includes at least one wheel disposed at the free end of the inner shaft, the at least one wheel rotatable through 360 degrees relative to the inner shaft about the perpendicular axis.

13. The system according to claim **9**, wherein the device is a surgical instrument.

14. The system according to claim **9**, wherein the device is a battery charging apparatus.

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